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THE TORQUE•TUBE

THE NEWS PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS

OF THE 1937-1938 BUICK CLUB • FOUNDED 1980



Index to Volume X

Volume XI • Number 2



THE TORQUE·TUBE

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VOL. XI, NO. 2

OCTOBER 1992

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As of this writing (October 29), no definite commitment by any other members to take over management of the Club and production of this publication has emerged. I said that I would retire as of January 1993, and if necessary I will try to do one more issue, but that one more will definitely be my last. Even if the Club must be suspended or terminated at that time, I would hope to get out a '93 Roster based on the new membership forms devised by Jim Flack; that would at least give everyone a "registry" that could be used for a couple of years.

The advices of my physicians and a psychologist confirm my decision that my life must be simplified. If the Club does continue, I will remain a member, will try to contribute some articles or commentary from time to time, and will assist the new Editor(s) if that can be done without sliding back into the pit. However, as the voices of many in this country say there must be political change, so there must be change in my own life: the time for that has clearly come.

I have received several letters from members saying in effect that while they were perhaps disappointed, they could understand and sympathize with my position, and were grateful for all I had done. (Interestingly but I suppose understandably, the closer in age to me the writer, the more sympathetic.) Some of these letters were obviously written carefully and artfully, indicating to me that the writer considered his message important. I thank the senders; as well, I thank such of you as may have had similar thoughts but not, for one reason or another, put them into written words.

* * * * *

The new owner of "FREYA", my '37 Roadmaster, is my friend and fellow Club member Jose Pardo. Jose and two companions flew to Columbus from South America, then drove the Roadmaster, filled with their luggage and numerous spare parts, to

In accordance with the time-honored traditions of this publication, there will be no November issue, and this one is labelled "October" even though you will receive it in November. The next one will, I hope, be out before Christmas. This issue also contains our Annual Index to the material in Volume X, or such of it at least as you are likely to want to look up. My thanks to John Breen (#533) for doing the index.

• FOUNDED BY DAVE LEWIS IN 1980 •



• COVERS •



The 1937 Special "plain-back" sedan (model 47) belongs to Steve King (#776) of Greenwood, Indiana. The advertising message is, I suppose, as timeless as the car.

GM factory photo of a 1938 Limited. All 90-series cars had whitewall tires as standard equipment.

Hershey, thence to Washington, D.C. and thence to Miami, where the car is now registered, all without major incident. On the way, they diagnosed a problem which I thought I had cured electrically, but which was not, after all, an electrical problem. Unnoticed by me and everyone who ever worked on the car, there was a "pinch" in the gas line, which caused fuel starving under heavy load, but only sporadically. Especially with the wood-framed '37 80 and 90 series bodies, which may flex more than the all-steel bodies of the other models, it is important to route the gas line carefully. Jose, who lives in South America, may eventually move the car there, but for the present it will remain in Florida, to which he travels frequently in pursuit of his plastics business. (Why rent a car when you can drive your own '37 Roadmaster?) "FREYA" II is a very nice, almost completely original '68 Riviera with less than 36,000 miles on the clock. I could not resist. For those of you who do not remember, or never saw, stories of the '37 from earlier times, Freya (sometimes spelled "Freia" or even "Freja") was, in Old Norse mythology, the Goddess of Beauty and Love.

In "Das Rheingold," the first opera in Wagner's "Ring" series, likewise based upon Teutonic myth, Freia is the Goddess of Youth and Beauty. To keep a corrupt bargain with the giants Fasolt and Fafnir, Wotan, king of the gods, must surrender Freia to them. Without Freia in their midst, the gods will age and die, and Wotan must redeem her by stealing from the evil dwarf Alberich the magic Rheingold (which Alberich has himself stolen) and delivering it to the giants. This sets off a complex chain of events spanning some 15 hours, more or less, of "music drama", culminating, natürlich, in the death of almost everyone who didn't die along the way. As the gods and goddesses required their Freia to keep them in their prime, so I adopted the view that my own "FREYA" was likewise necessary for me. This position may not, however, work for a mere mortal, and I cannot in conscience say that the first FREYA may not have aged me, as those who recall the chronicles of her troubles may appreciate. It may be that I ought not to take unto myself a name from the Hoary and Epic Legends of my ancestors, have that name punched into a flimsy sheet of steel by men incarcerated for terrible crimes, and bolt the resulting plate to a contrivance shunned by bearded and pious men as the devil's handiwork. Should I abandon my "vanity"? I've never seen another license plate with the name of a goddess, and after all, the Deities of Ancient Myth are all dead, aren't they? Or are they? Perhaps time will tell.

Bill



Only one member identified the diligent fellow pictured on page 3 of the last issue, preparing his car for the Saturday judging at the BCA 1989 National. That member was the pictured person himself, Paul Cusano (#52) who said he recognized "that fine fellow Paul Cusano by his face!" (Now look at the photo again.) Here's another picture of the Cusano 40-C sans faces of any kind.



A fine '38 46-C owned by Sid and Wendy Niccum (#113) of Clarion, Iowa at a summer show. I'm not sure who the young fellow is, but he seems to be having a good time.

RARE PAIR

The following is taken from Old Car News & Marketplace for October 8, 1992, and discusses the BCA Metro Chapter's 17th Annual Show, held this year in Beltsville, Maryland. A highlight of this show was a pair of '37 Special four-door convertibles owned by Club members Andy Diem (#852) and Jack Frank (#739). Congratulations to Jack, who won best of show. One item of interest in this article is the reference to "G. Crawford's '39 Limited" which is said to retain '38 styling and floor-mounted shift lever. I wonder whether the reporter was actually referring to the '38 Limited owned by George Cranford (#202) of Lanham, Maryland, which was likely at the show.



Show Biz

Edited by Teresa T. Vickery

Rare pair of Buicks at BCA show

Rare Buicks, including several matching pairs, provided extra attractions for spectators and participants alike during the 17th annual show of the Buick Club of America's (BCA) Metro (Washington, D.C.) Chapter, Aug. 8 at the Beltsville/Calverton Holiday Inn in Beltsville, Md.

Though 72 Buicks had preregistered for the BCA event, threatening skies the entire day kept the turnout below 60, including six in the car corral, which also featured a handful of vendors. For the second consecutive year, Buicks from the 1960s dominated the event, the 19 from that decade easily surpassing 12 models from the 1970s and a surprisingly large 10 from the 1930s. But those 10 cars drew the most spectator interest.

The rarest pair of Buicks in Beltsville were matching dark green '37 Special (Series 40) Model 40C four-door convertible phaetons. Andy Diem's is completely original with only 19,700 miles. But his Buick came from many years of "tomb-like storage" in Mount Kisco, N.Y., and showed more age than the low mileage might otherwise indicate. Jack Frank's convertible sedan is identical, except for its dual sidemounts. It has been superbly restored inside and out and was awarded the best of show trophy.

Another rare 1930s Buick present was G. Crawford's '39 Limited Series Model 90 four-door eight-passenger touring sedan, which was displayed with its two jump seats up. Only 650 examples of this huge, impressive model were produced retaining the 1938 styling and floor-mounted gearshift. Three '38s, a '39 Century sedan, two more '37s, and Ralph Beecraft's pristine '35 Series 40 coupe (the show's oldest car) completed the 1930s lineup.

BACK ISSUES: Vol. X, Nos. 1-9 (Sept. '91 - Aug. '92) \$3.00 each postpaid in U.S.A. and Canada, \$4.00 each overseas. 1992 Roster (Did you lose yours? Need a second copy for the office?), same price. Send check, money order (U.S. Funds only, please), or cash if you want, to the Editor.

PLEASE NOTE: CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Quite a few members have moved — or at least waited until recently to notify me via the annual renewal/roster info forms. There are too many address changes to conveniently fit into this issue a list of them. If you have a problem corresponding with another member, please let me know: I can likely give you his current address.

-Bill

California Fun Run

COOL AUGUST NIGHTS

By Greg Marshall (#148)

Photos by Bill Schaeffer and Greg Marshall

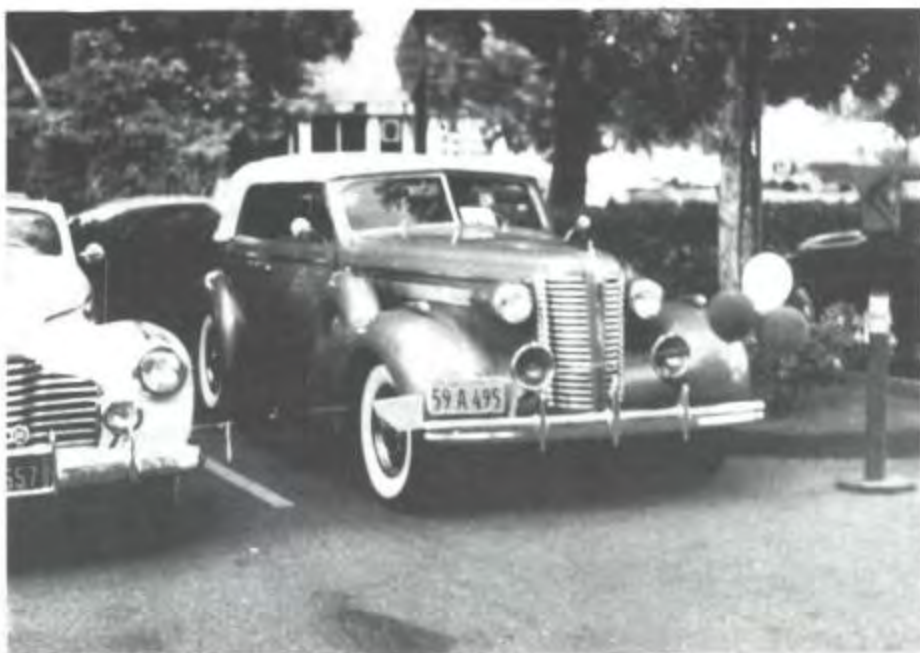
"Cool August Nights" was the theme for the "All G.M. Fun Run" in Santa Maria, California on August 27 through 30. For those of you in other parts of the country, August is usually hot. But Santa Maria is located along California's central coast area and is generally in the 75 to 85 degree range, with nights down in the 60's. The weather was perfect for the 65 various G.M. cars that attended. The mix included Cadillacs, Pontiacs, Olds, and a big bunch of Buicks. Among the Buicks there were seven cars owned by '37-'38 club members with two cars owned by non-members also attending all or part of the weekend.

The run was sponsored by the Orange County Chapter of the Buick Club of America and was kicked off with a hospitality night on Thursday for the early arrivals. Friday was a bright and beautiful day and featured a tour to the Dennis Brooks Ranch south of Santa Maria for a look at his private collection of cars. Then it was back to the host hotel, The Santa Maria Inn, for an afternoon of relaxing or looking at the cars coming in for the weekend. Saturday brought another tour with the cars, this time out across



A line-up of Buicks at the entrance to the Santa Maria Inn ready for the Sunday tour. Bill and Karren Schaeffer's '37 Century is in the lead; also visible are Greg and Tricia Marshall's modified '37 and Landy and Helga Brakke's '38 Roadmaster.

some of the beautiful countryside around Santa Maria to the Zaca Mesa Winery for a picnic lunch on the lawn of the winery, a tour of the winemaking area and a chance to taste some of their award-winning wines. Then it was off across the back roads again to visit the small, but very picturesque and old, town of Los Alamos. The town dates back into the 1800's, with many buildings still in use today that were built before 1900. The town now caters mostly to tourists who come to shop in the many antique stores. Back at the hotel, 110 people enjoyed the catered barbecue in the poolside cabana on Saturday evening.



1938 Roadmaster "phaeton" owned by Landy Brakke.

Sunday morning dawned bright and beautiful, just right for a drive up the coast to a little town called Shell Beach, just north of Pismo Beach, for a sumptuous brunch. The place was McLintocks, overlooking the pacific. They're known for the old time western decor and for the huge portions of great food they serve. This tour was led by the members of the '37-'38 Club with seven '37 and '38 Buicks heading up the group of 27 hungry folks who attended. Then it was time to get the cars grouped together for some last minute pictures and talk among the new and old friends and to head down the road to our respective destinations.

A total of 140 people attended this run with 30 being members in the '37-'38 Club.

Special thanks has to go to the many members of the Orange County Chapter of the B.C.A. for all the hard work to put this run together. It was a fun, no pressure, enjoy your old car and friends weekend. A good time was had by all!



Somewhere along the way, George and Linda Canavan's '37 Century received a two-tone cream and maroon paint job. It gets better the more you look at it.



Saul Hoffman's 1938 business coupe at McClintock's Restaurant.



Ever since he retired, Harry Logan (#651) seems to turn up everywhere. Here he is at the Santa Maria Show with his '38 Century coupe.



A Man With a Plan

By Robert Farrier (#752)

I will try to set into words the acquisition scenario of my 1938 Century 61. I hope that it will be both interesting and useful to the readers of the "Torque Tube". In mid-August I enjoyed meeting Dave Bylsma at a BCA show in Calverton, MD and getting some ideas from him as well as seeing his and some of the other members' 37 and 38's.

During my later years in high school, around 1973-74, I saw an ad in the local daily newspaper for a 1937 Century coupe with a cracked block and a 1938 Century sedan with no transmission. I was interested, but with the defects apparent in both I saw no future in either of these vehicles, having just acquired a 1953 New Yorker as my first car, which I still own, from my aunt. On a trip with my high school physics teacher to the garage which he used, I saw the 1938 Century sedan and learned from the garage owner that it was not for sale. At this time I had no idea what had happened to the 1937 coupe. I entered the local university at this time and had no further ideas concerning the old-car hobby except to keep the New Yorker going.



A Man with a Plan. Bob Farrier demonstrates that although the car may be a bit rough, the running board is still strong enough to sit on.

During the summer of 1976 I saw the 1938 Century sedan parked at a Texaco station near Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University where at this time I was desperately trying to maintain the minimum grade point average to remain enrolled. I asked the owner about this car and found that it belonged to his brother-in-law who was an avid Buick and Cadillac collector. I met this gentleman at the station one day and found that the Century was indeed for sale as he had just gotten a 1947 Cadillac convertible in which he was more interested.

A reasonable deal was struck and I became the proud owner of a 1938 Century sedan. The car was complete though partially disassembled. It was later that I learned that the 1937 coupe had donated its transmission to the 1938 sedan as someone had purchased the coupe who had a good chassis and needed a body. I have never laid eyes on the coupe; however, I do have what I believe is the original frozen and rusty 1938 transmission.

The 1938 would start and run but it had very little in the way of service brakes and the parking brake was (and is) non functional. My father obtained a dealer's plate from the local Chevy dealer and we proceeded to take the Century the 10 miles home over two mountains on a four-lane US highway. The Century had its fender well covers and hood sides removed. The hood top was wired on. The entire car was covered with surface rust, the speedometer did not work and there was not much in the way of an exhaust system left. In this state we proceeded onto the main road with my dad and college roommate following me in a 1971 Chevy Blazer. Such a disreputable looking vehicle on the highway caused many a head to turn. It was indeed fortunate that no police were encountered as there is no doubt that we would all have had the book thrown at us. I hate to think what would have happened to the Chevy dealer from whom my father had borrowed the dealer plate had we been arrested. I tried to keep the car at a very



Only one hubcap remained on the car, and this is it. The tire is a Firestone Transport Heavy-Duty Safety-Lock Gum-Dipped Cord; that is, a truck tire from long ago.

moderate rate of speed, around 30. My followers later stated that I had been keeping a pace of around 40-45. Downhill was an adventure. Brakes were pumped madly. From behind in the Blazer my dad and roommate could hear the shoes clacking. Fortunately I got my prize home without mishap.

Once home I attempted to sort things out as well as possible. Some items were put into the barn, i.e. the old transmission, wheel well covers, etc. My first job was to replace the entire brake system. New wheel cylinders and relined shoes all around with a master cylinder kit and new hydraulic lines provided excellent service brakes. I did not attempt to rig the parking brake. The interior was, and unfortunately is, the proverbial rats' nest. I learned of an old Buick dealership about 50 miles away which supposedly had a lot of old parts. I made a trip to them. The shop foreman told me that an old cylinder head was around, and I obtained what was a large series head which had been rebuilt by this dealer years ago for \$5. I pulled the head from my car and discovered that the water gallery was not the same. I took my head and the rebuilt head to a local shop and had the original head redone. The exhaust valves in the 1938 were burnt to a crisp. I said that it had not missed a lick in the run home over the mountain. The mechanic said that because it was a straight eight that the torque had kept it going and but had it been an in-line six it would have bucked like a bronco. The good valves from the purchased head were ground into my head. The head was replaced with all new gaskets and the valves adjusted. It ran well even though some of the pistons were loose in their bores. A great deal of sludge was removed from the pushrod gallery and oil pan.

At about this time, being both without time and money, I hand-sanded the worst of the surface rust, smeared a thick coating of black Rustoleum over the car in order to stabilize it, parked it under a shed, and made plans. The car has been partially rewired since this time, but the starter subsequently gave out.

Unfortunately things have been on hold for the better part for several years. I have gotten a great many tips and a lot of inspiration from the "Torque Tube" since I have been a Club member. My father was a great source of practical advice with regard to this car as he was about my current age (36) when the Century was new. Unfortunately he passed away a few years ago and, as he predicted, never lived to see the completed project. He was always a Buick fan. My earliest recollection of a family car was an early fifties black Buick, followed with a blue 1959 LeSabre. The next was a 1964 LeSabre, followed by a 65 Skylark, 1967 LeSabre, 1968 Electra, 1971 Electra (my favorite), 1975 LeSabre, and 1983 LeSabre. My mother continues the tradition with a 1987 LeSabre. If it were not for having worked away from my home base for a while, the current demands of graduate school and a very erratic full-time job schedule since returning, perhaps I would have been able to make more progress. It is still my plan to one day drive this fine automobile on the highway again. I slowly gather parts and expertise. The only items missing are the back trunk lid emblem and a trim ring for the top of one of the sidemount covers. I have toyed with the idea of using a later trunk emblem and rigging it with turn signals or finding and using an original and reworking the original lights to accommodate turn signals. I prefer originality. I will continue my endeavors and wish all the members continued success.



A daunting project, surely, but worse cars have been resurrected.





MEMORIES



RUNNING FAST, STANDING STILL

By Clint Preslan (#461)

During spring vacation in 1948, my kindergarten-age brother and my seven-year-old self were spending several days with our grandparents. It was a warm April evening in Rocky River, Ohio, and I was towing Vic around the back yard in our red wagon. Our grandmother appeared at the screened kitchen window.

"All right boys, supper in ten minutes. Put the wagon away."

We rolled the wagon through the side door of the musty-smelling brick garage, keeping it far away from the black 1937 Roadmaster. It had rained two days earlier, and the Roadmaster was grimed with road spray. This was unusual, because my grandfather liked to keep the Buick clean, really clean.

"Maybe he's gonna sell it," Vic said. I argued against this concept. Our grandfather loved the car, he would never sell it.

"Yeah, but Dad was sayin' he should get rid of it....it's gettin' too old."

I attacked this idea, too, but had heard similar suggestions. The big Buick looked almost new, but was years older than I was.

As we turned to leave, a brilliant thought flashed into my mind; nobody would buy an older car if the price was too high! I could fix that. I hurried to the right rear door. After licking my forefinger, I began tracing letters on the filmy surface.

"Hey, whatta you doin'?"

"Shut up. I'm writin' here....important stuff."

"Yeah? You're gonna get your butt kicked in. I'm tellin'."

This was no good; my brother had to be part of the plan. After further argument, Vic agreed saving the Buick was a worthwhile cause.

I licked the bitter-tasting grit off my finger for the last time, and examined my work: "THIS CAR FOR SALE \$100." Vic and I agreed one hundred dollars was about all the money there was in the world, and reasonable people would be shocked by our exorbitant price. While I made final adjustments to my letters, Vic licked his fingers and used them to wipe off the taillight lenses. Then he wiped his hands on his pants.

"Smooth," I thought, "but little kids did things like that." We were late for supper and both of us got into trouble, anyway.

The next afternoon, Vic and I were in the back yard when our grandfather drove up the driveway. As soon as he stopped, he called us to the Buick. He sounded annoyed and was not his usual, pleasant self.

"Now, which one of you wrote that?" He pointed to my carefully lettered message. Sensing problems, my first impulse was to blame Vic, but he was finishing kindergarten and was hard-pressed to spell "cow." He didn't do classifieds.

Because of my sales strategy, my grandfather had received offers from potential buyers in a downtown Cleveland parking garage.

He was not amused. He explained the error of my \$100. valuation, stressing nice '37 Roadmasters, especially this one, were worth more, and I learned about multiples of 100.

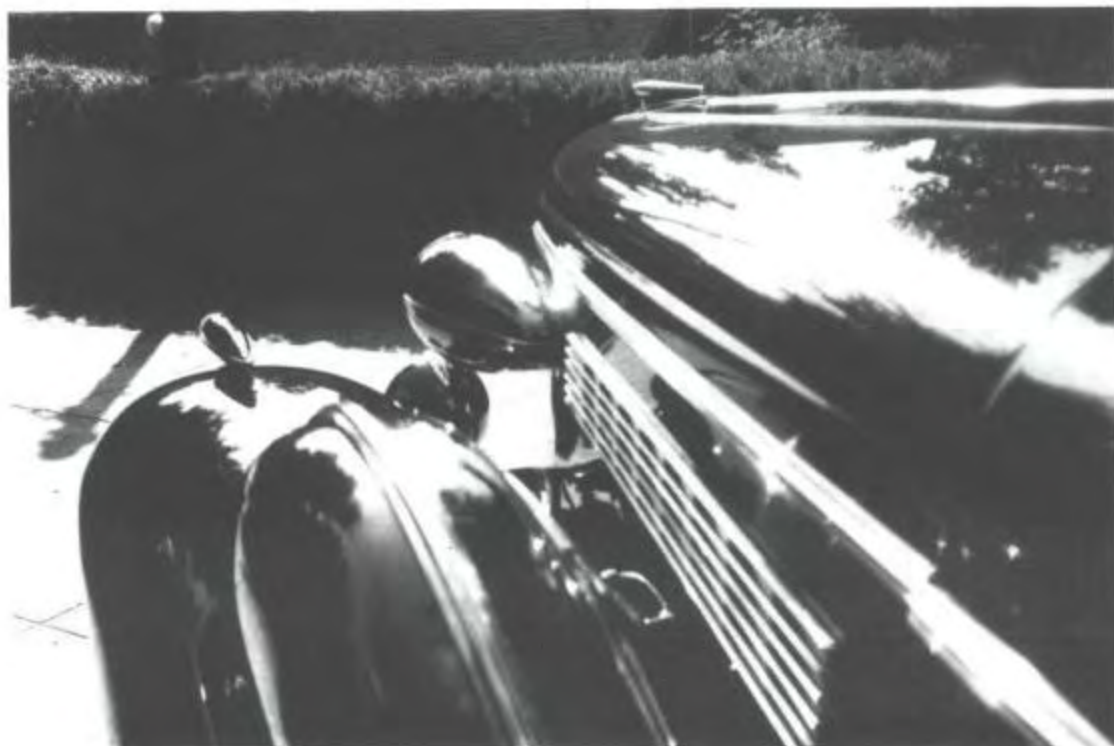
Just after school started in September, the '37 disappeared. My grandfather traded it on a light blue '48 Roadmaster with yellow fog lamps. The '48 was good-looking and reliable, but was no substitute for the '37. The accompanying photo tells the story: there I am on spring vacation, 1950. Never, ever, even in the '37's last days, would I have dreamed of sitting on its front fender to eat an ice cream cone.



A youthful Clint Preslan posed in 1950 on the fender of his grandfather's 1948 Roadmaster. In the background is the "Million Dollar Pier" in St. Petersburg, Florida, completed in 1929. In 1950, the second floor of the pier housed radio station WSUN.

The '48 was sleek, low, bomb-sight modern. It was a good Buick, but I could sit on it and eat ice cream. The '48 had no sidemounts, runningboards, or headlight pods; it was not mysterious and high off the ground, or streamlined like the last steam locomotive from the Twentieth Century Limited. When I stood on the '37's runningboard and sighted down the long, tapered hood, I always felt it running fast, standing still:

View from the running board of Clint Preslan's '37 Roadmaster.



"Power, speed and distance,
Melting into space."*

Thirty-five years later, I found another '37. It was tired, neglected and sick, but when I sat in the lumpy moth-eaten seat and heard the straight eight gargle down the pipe and gripped its cracked steering wheel as second gear sang the distinct Buick song; well....

....awful neat old cars, aren't they?

#####

*from The Iron Way, anonymous, circa 1855





TECHNICAL TIPS



PAINT

I may get more questions about paint than any other subject. First — and this is directed primarily to our newer members — the Club has developed formulas that will enable you to match most of the original 1937 and 1938 colors in either DuPont automotive lacquer or enamel. ("Match" means come as close as is possible.) These formulas were developed by Lauren Matley (#46), who owns a paint business, using an excellent set of original samples and an elaborate piece of apparatus (the name of which I forget) that enables the skilled user to blend an array of samples of available colors visually until he gets exactly the right hue. In a few cases it was not possible to get an acceptable match, and there are some basic colors in the formulas that may no longer be available from DuPont — the work was done several years ago. Notwithstanding these flaws, however, the whole thing is a monumental piece of work, and a better resource than most clubs our size can provide. If you want the formula for a particular color, or two or three colors, just ask me. (As with all questions or requests, it will be greatly appreciated if you enclose a SASE — that means "Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope.")

Second, and this is also perhaps directed primarily at the novice, it is the Editor's opinion that many people place far too much emphasis on the precise duplication of original colors. In the first place, as suggested above, absolutely precise or exact duplication is impossible, because no surviving sample of an original color, however well preserved it may appear to be, is precisely the same as it was 50 years ago. I have several '37 and '38 paint charts, and each one varies slightly from all of the others. Likewise, if one lined up all the '37 Buicks that purport to be "Chancellor Blue," say, or "Wellington Grey," or indeed any of the other colors except black, and looked at them in the same light, no one car would exactly match any of the others, and in some cases the differences would be marked. For example, both Clint Preslan (#461) and I have '37 Roadmaster sedans. both cars were repainted during restoration in an effort to match the original "Chancellor Blue," but the two colors are noticeably different. Clint's is probably too dark and mine is probably too light, and the original Chancellor Blue was probably somewhere in between. However — and this is the important thing — both look nice and both look "right" for a late '30s large sedan, and if you didn't see them together you'd very likely never notice the difference. The primary concern of the restorer, in my opinion, should be to achieve a color that looks "right" for the car. That may be done by attempting, through the formulas mentioned above, to match the car's original color or another '37 or '38 color, or it may be done by using a modern color that is reasonably close to one of those colors, or for the more adventurous, by using a modern color that is reasonably close to some other GM color in use around the mid-1930s.

I will return to the use of modern colors below, but first: how does one know what looks "right"? I can't answer this very precisely. It is more a matter of experience and thoughtful observation than anything else. It helps of course to have access to a bunch of 1930s color charts, but that is not essential. Looking at a lot of cars, and considering the styles and tastes of the 1930s, is the best. Tastes move in cycles, and

the period between roughly 1932 and 1940 was rather conservative so far as car colors went. Although a greater array of colors was available than in the 1920s, when often each model had only a single standard color scheme, most (besides black) were variations on the basics: dark gray; dark blue; dark green; maroon. The number of cars produced in beige or the lighter blues and greens was small, and these colors were very largely limited to convertibles and sport coupes. (Although no hard evidence for the proposition exists, there are suggestions in some literature I have seen that color mixes also varied by region: for example, beige cars would have been more popular in the Plains states and the Southwest, where many roads were unpaved and dusty.) Such colors as white, red, brilliant blues, pale grey or silver, metallic gold, and the like, that are often seen on modern cars, were unheard of in the 1930s and would have been considered wholly inappropriate. Metallic colors came into use around the mid-1930s, and several 1937 and 1938 Buick colors are metallic (sometimes called "luminescent"), but the available technology permitted the use of only small metallic particles (or "flakes") and the metallic effect is quite subdued.

You will find a wide array of modern colors that are sufficiently close approximations of 1930s colors that they will look right, and very few people — or none — will suspect that what you used was not an "official" GM color of the period. For example: 1992 Chevrolet truck "Slate Gray Metallic" is very close to 1937 Wellington Grey — with the exception of the metallic effect, as mentioned above; 1992 Ford "Dark Titanium" is very close to 1937 Windsor Grey; in the late 1980s Ford used a non-metallic dark blue on large sedans — popular as an unmarked police car color — that would probably look fine. There are also "fleet colors" — used on trucks, trailers, equipment, etc. — that might be investigated. Go to an automotive paint distributor and look at samples. This approach, a resort to modern colors to find close matches for '37 or '38 colors, works best for dark grays, dark blues or greens, and maroon. It would probably not work for '37 Samarra Beige, '37 Sudan Blue, '38 Botticelli Blue, '38 Raphael Green and maybe a few others that are a little more out of the ordinary. One word of caution: if you use a modern metallic color, you should have it mixed with medium or small flake particles; otherwise the metallic effect may be too pronounced.

Some literature suggests that cars could be ordered with "special paint," at extra cost. Presumably, taxi fleets, fire and police departments, and the like, might have done this. In addition, it seems likely, or at least possible, that any buyer could have ordered a Buick painted in a Pontiac color, or a 1937 Buick painted in a 1936 color, or something similar. This opens up a wider range of color treatments that might be considered "authentic" or "correct," but puts the owner who goes in this direction out on a limb in judged meets. I can recall two examples of the problem involving members of the Club at BCA National Meets. Guy Bennett (#161) has a '37 Special convertible that is painted "cream" — i.e. a sort of very light tannish yellow. That is not a 1937 color, and there wasn't anything even close to it in the 1937 color charts. ('37 Samarra Beige is very much different.) However, "cream" was a 1936 Buick color. Guy contended successfully that "special paint" on a '37 could clearly have comprehended a color that was standard in '36, and the judges did not take points off for a "non-authentic" color. By contrast, Marshall Nelson's '37 80-C got a 20-point mandatory non-authentic color deduction at the 1991 Meet because it's red. It is theoretically possible that someone might have special-ordered a red 80-C and that Buick might have turned one out; absent some proof that this actually happened, however, red was too far outside the range of what was done at the time to be accepted as "correct." Both cases were "judgment calls," and with different sets of judges might have gone the other way. I believe both rulings were proper, or at least defensible, but these cases show that, if you want to depart from reasonably-close approximations of the standard colors, you may expect troubles in formal judging competitions. (They also show that car judging can be quite subjective.)

Samples of paint should be inspected under natural light, and one should bear in mind that a color on a small "chip" frequently looks darker than a wider expanse of the same color will look.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The preceding item was written a few months ago, before I sold my '37 and Lauren Matley sold his paint business.

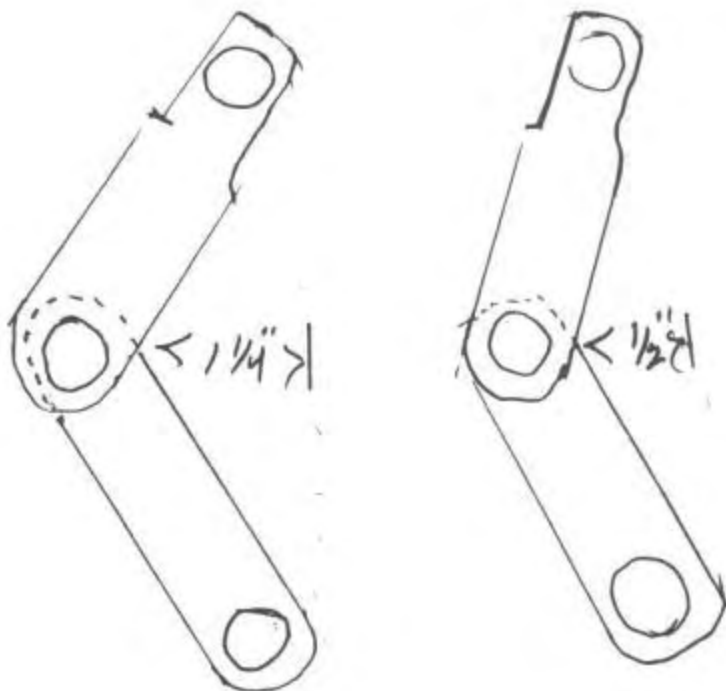
MORE ON PAINT: WHEEL COLORS

Ed Elkinson (#749) has been trying to ferret out more information on the mostly-mysterious 1938 optional wheel colors. A representative of DuPont's automotive products operation in Troy, Michigan was good enough to rummage through the company's archives, but could find no more wheel color chips or formulas. We may have gone as far with this business as we can go; however, if anyone has an apparently-original '38 whose wheels are a different color than its body, please try to describe that color as best you can and pass the description on to me or to Ed.

DECK LID SUPPORT ARMS - '37 40-C

Bob Richards (#596) says that he is having trouble with the support arms for the rear deck lid of his '37 model 40-C. "Both support arms," he says, "are identical but the anchors of the arms are in different positions. when the lid is raised, one arm is 1-1/4 inches and the other is 1/2 inch from center. Can anyone tell me what is wrong — or is this the way they were made?" (See the sketch below.)

I don't know the answer. Can any member help Bob out?



REBUILDING THE STEERING GEAR - '38 40 AND 60 SERIES

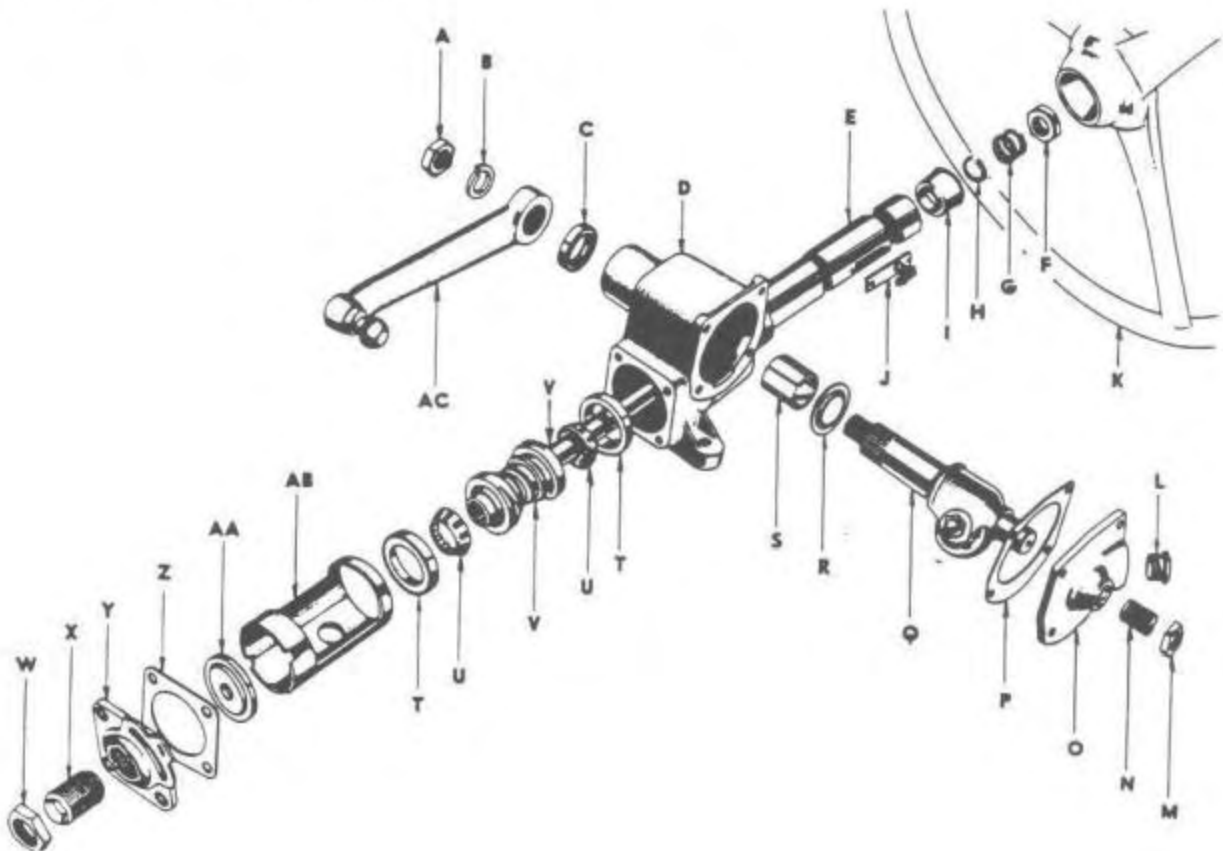
By Harry Logan (#651)

Do you have too much steering wheel play? Is the steering lash adjustment at maximum so the play can't be adjusted out? These were my symptoms, but a rebuild of the steering box cured them. And as a bonus I discovered a broken tie rod spring.

A friend who has rebuilt several Buick steering boxes told me he removes the steering column and disassembles and cleans the gear box. He has not had to replace any bearings or parts. This inspired me to do the same, but without removing the column and box from the car.

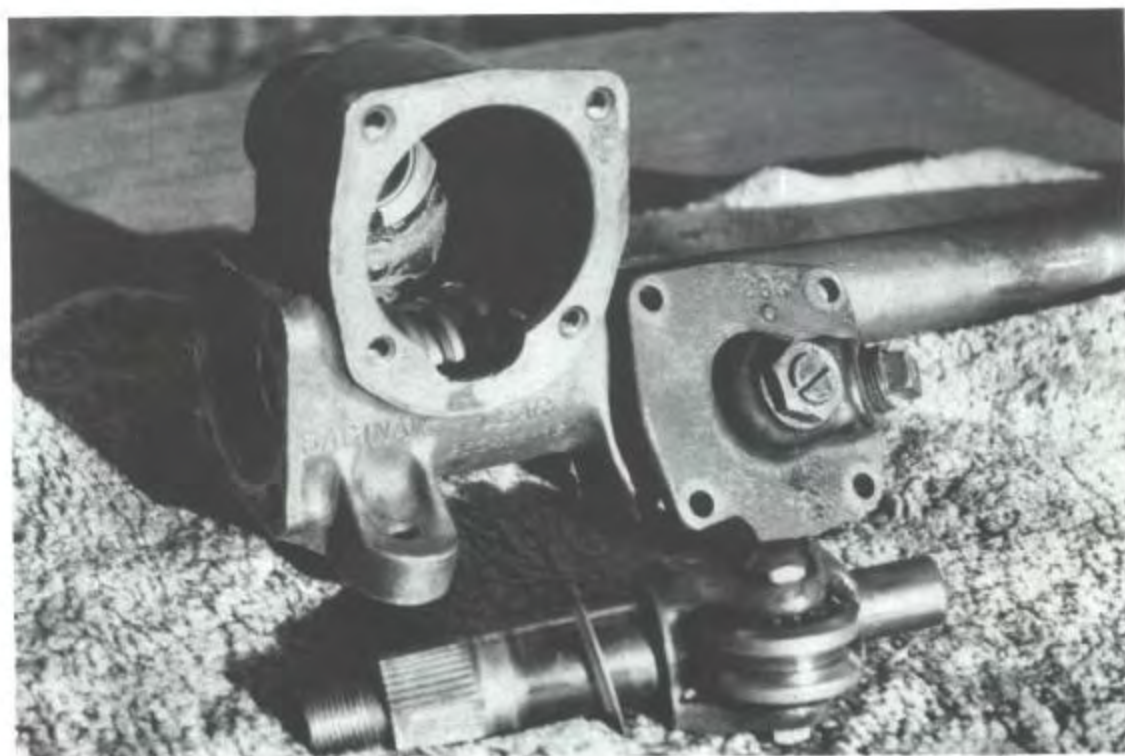
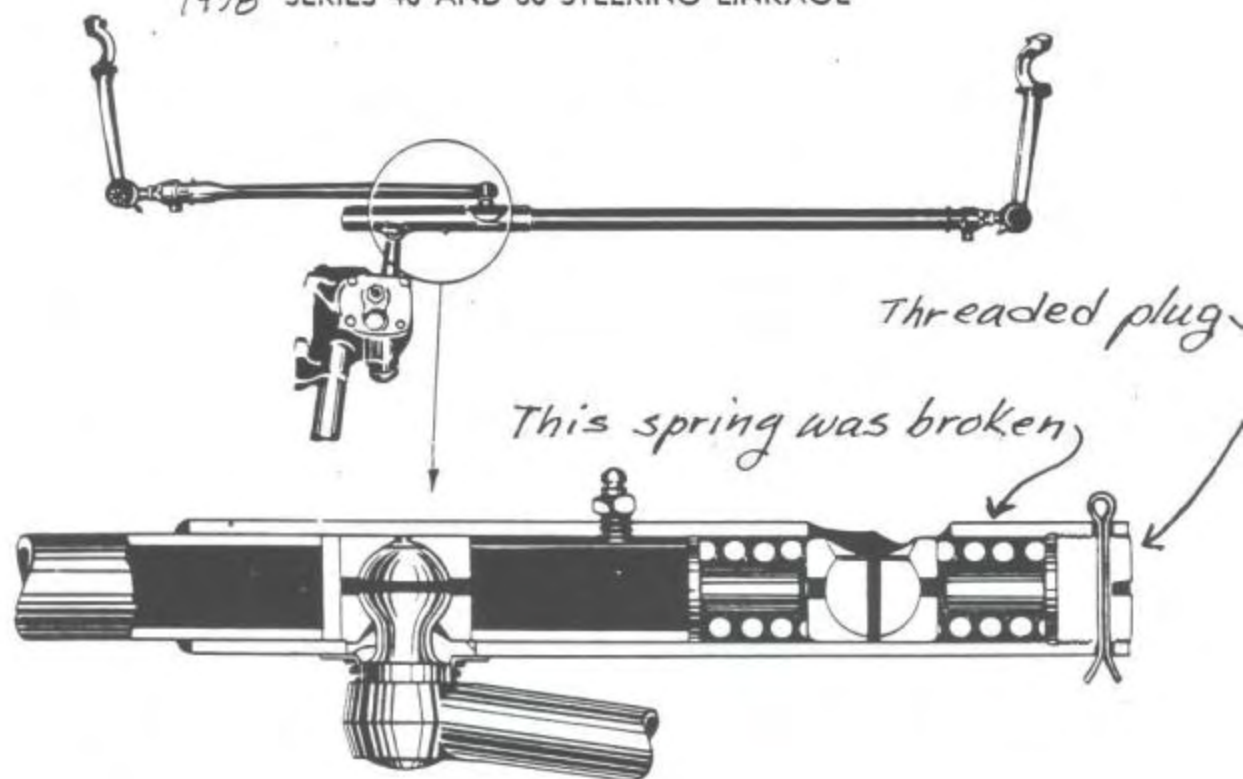
From under the car, disconnect the steering tie rod from the pitman arm. Note how far the tie rod end plug is screwed in. Normally it should be about flush with the end of the tie rod. The plug on mine was screwed in about 1/4 inch from the end. After removing the cotter pin and the plug, I found the outer spring had broken into three pieces. So if your tie rod end plug has to be screwed in more than normal, check for a broken spring.

Next remove the 4 bolts holding the gear box end plate (Y). Remove the plate and thrust washer (AA) behind it.



STEERING GEAR

1938 SERIES 40 AND 60 STEERING LINKAGE



From the engine compartment, remove the steering box cover (O), then reach in and pull out the roller shaft (Q).

Now clean the parts you've removed and the gear box with a degreasing solvent. An aerosol spray will make it easier to get at the worm gear and its bearings which are not removed.

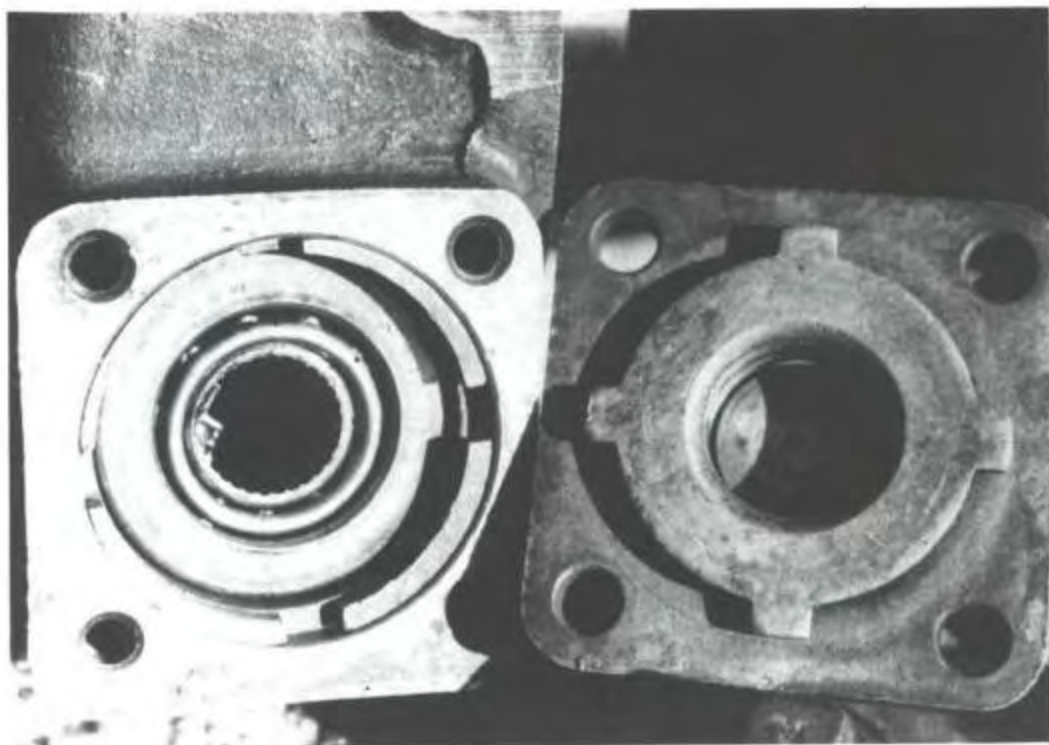
Then reassemble all the parts. Before I tightened the four end plate bolts, I tapped the lash adjuster to put it in the middle of its range (the bolt in the middle of the long adjuster slot). The photo shows the lash adjuster at its maximum position with no more adjustment possible. This was how my car was before rebuilding.

Note that the inside of the end cover (Y) has a plate (see photo) that moves when you tap the lash adjuster. This plate has 4 nipples that mate with the 4 recesses in the eccentric sleeve (AB). Taping the lash adjuster moves the eccentric sleeve (AB) to adjust the steering wheel play.

Be sure to make new gaskets for both gear box covers. I used 1/34 inch gasket material.

Then fill the gear box. Matt Joseph of "Skinned Knuckles" magazine recommends 140 gear oil. You can also order GM steering gear lubricant (GM Part No. 8.800 1052182) dispensed in 10 ounce tubes for manual steering gears from your local GM dealer.

Finally, make three adjustments following the procedures beginning on page 9-1 of the '37 and '38 shop manuals. The adjustments are to:



Eccentric sleeve (AB) shown on left; back of end cover (Y) on right.

1. Remove roller shaft end play. This is the slotted screw on the top of the gear box.
2. Remove the worm shaft end play. This is the slotted screw on the bottom of the gear box.
3. Remove backlash between the worm and roller gears. This is the plate with the arrow. To remove lash, tap lightly in the direction of the arrow, 1/16 of an inch at a time. (Read the shop manual for complete details.)

Do the adjustments in this order. After rebuilding and adjusting the gear box, my cars handling was much improved.



Lash adjuster arrow shown at top.

QUICK GENERATOR TESTS

Here, courtesy of Andy Diem (#852), is an article from the January 1937 issue of Automobile Digest ("The Master Journal of Complete Automotive Service") that might provide you with more insight into charging system troubles. The "AVR" instrument pictured (ammeter, voltmeter and variable resistance) can be purchased or contrived, but some of the tests discussed do not require its use.

Quick Generator Tests



Some methods which permit checking condition of this unit

By T. C. STEWART

LOCATING trouble in the generator is not always easy and depends upon the nature of the trouble. Sometimes, to get a proper diagnosis it is necessary to remove the generator and make bench tests. It should be understood that a very light ground, short or intermittent open may not prevent generating some current, but these minor faults must be located and corrected to get efficient output. Instead of correcting themselves, they usually get worse. Another factor is that all connections in the charging circuit must be tight and clean.

The constant changes made in the regulating devices for this unit to meet public demands means that we find in service units with a variety of characteristics. The generator is also called on to do more than any other unit in the electrical system and in some respects much time can be wasted in diagnosis.

Perhaps the greatest complaint is charging rate. To get an accurate test for output, the car ammeter cannot be depended upon and it is necessary to connect a portable ammeter in the circuit. This should be an accurate instrument and connected in series with the dash ammeter. Remove the wire from the generator cutout and connect to one side of the portable ammeter and then connect the other wire to the cutout terminal of the car ammeter. Then start the engine to obtain readings. This permits checking to determine whether the charging rate is within the maximum limit specified for the unit.

The charging rate may be too high or too low and this can only be decided by taking into consideration the output requirements, the practical limits of the generator and the driving habits. Most generators are belt driven and a prominent cause for low output is slipping of the drive belt. A fair indication of this is that the engine must be operated at high speeds to reach the maximum charging rate.

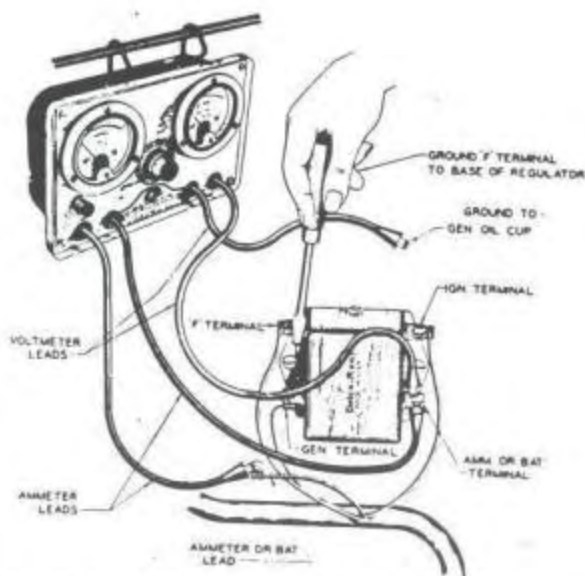


Fig. 1. Method of using an A. V. R. instrument in testing the generator

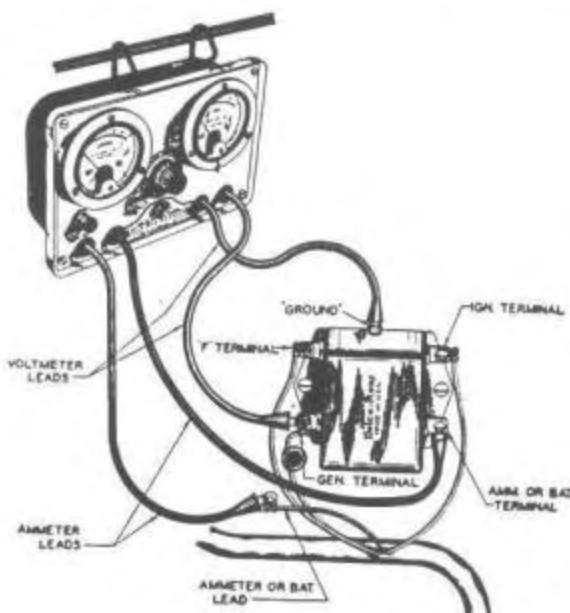


Fig. 2. Method of using the A. V. R. instrument in testing the cutout relay

Heating of the generator is an indication of too high a charging rate. It may be due to high voltage resulting from high resistance in the car wiring, arcing of the brushes or friction heat set up by tight bearings or armature core rubbing the pole pieces. Throwing of solder from the commutator results from overheating and is usually evident upon inspection. This condition may also be due to a defective thermostat when the generator is so equipped.

An eccentric commutator is readily indicated by holding a pencil on one of the brushes while the generator is running slowly. If commutator is eccentric, the brush can be felt to rise and fall. Sparking due to poor brush contact is evident upon inspection after removing the cover band. This is also true of the condition of the brushes and the commutator.

Any condition such as a gummy commutator, high mica, weak brush springs, thrown solder, worn brushes, brush arm sticking, loose internal connections at the generator third brush arm and defective relay will result in an internal open circuit. The first four of these might result in a charge rate below normal. To test operation of the relay, let the engine run and close the contact points. If ammeter indicates charge, check the internal circuits of the relay with test points. If the voltage coil is open, points will not close while an open current coil prevents charge from passing to the battery.

A quick generator test is to remove the drive belt and then close the cutout points by hand to permit current to flow through the generator from the battery. Generator should motor smoothly, while raising the third brush arm should increase the generator speed and also raise the current required to motor the generator. Failure to increase current required for motoring when the third brush is raised, would indicate the field is open at all times. If the generator motors in a jerky manner and the ammeter needle vibrates, showing a heavy, intermittent current draw there is either an open or a short in the armature.

Grab the drive pulley close to the cutout points and slow down the armature against the direction of rotation, at the same time watching the ammeter. The current draw will probably be approximately twice that required for free motoring. If a dead spot is felt while you slowly rotate the armature and brushes are making good contact, there is evidence of an open circuit in the armature. If the current increases as you "feel" the dead spot, the armature is shorted or grounded.

If the generator will not charge and the above routine has failed, the generator should be removed and tested by motoring on the bench using storage battery and portable ammeter with 0 to 30 ampere scale. The circuit breaker should not be connected into the circuit. Before making the final connection, brush wire against terminal to avoid damage to the ammeter. A badly shorted generator may draw an excess current and damage the ammeter. If, during motoring test, the ammeter pointer flickers and does not become steady, the armature is open or shorted.

The voltmeter can be used for checking bad connections in the charging circuit and the ammeter for checking the battery ground, inserting the instrument in series from battery to ground. With all switches off there should be no reading on the ammeter. Test stands simplify these various inspection tests and should be used when available.

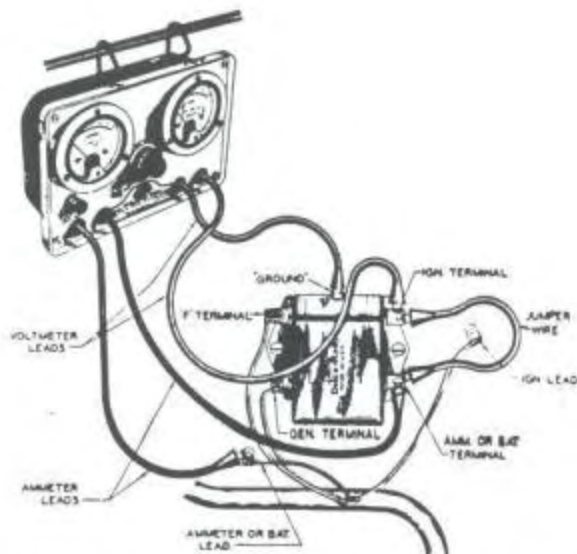


Fig. 1. Method of using the A. V. R. Instrument in testing the voltage regulator

For testing modern generating equipment, dependable voltmeter, ammeter and variable resistance are essential. Such instruments and their application in testing the Oldsmobile Delco-Remy voltage-regulated generator are illustrated. It should be understood that all test readings must be made with the voltage regulator cover in place.

To test generator, refer to Fig 1, disconnect lead from "BAT" terminal of regulator and connect positive ammeter lead to "BAT" regulator terminal. Connect negative ammeter lead to lead disconnected from "BAT" regulator terminal. Connect positive voltmeter lead to "BAT" regulator terminal and negative lead to ground (oil cup on generator). Tester resistance should be off (out of circuit). Ground F terminal of regulator to eliminate the regulator resistance. Refer to test specifications and speed up engine for maximum generator output. Then adjust tester resistance to give correct current output. If generator fails to produce specified output, it will be necessary to analyze as to possible cause for this condition.

To test the cutout relay connections should be made as shown in Fig 2. Disconnect lead from "BAT" terminal of regulator. Connect positive ammeter lead to "BAT" regulator terminal and negative lead to lead disconnected from "BAT" regulator terminal. Connect positive voltmeter lead to "GEN" regulator terminal and negative lead to ground (regulator cover screw). Refer to test specifications for comparing test results.

To test voltage regulator make connections as shown in Fig. 3, making sure to disconnect lead from "IGN" terminal of regulator and temporarily connect "IGN" terminal to "BAT" terminal by means of a jumper wire. Disconnect lead from "BAT" terminal of regulator and connect positive ammeter lead to "BAT" regulator terminal. Connect negative ammeter lead to lead disconnected from "BAT" regulator terminal. Connect positive voltmeter lead to "IGN" terminal and negative lead to ground (regulator cover screw.)

Temporarily ground generator field resistance at field terminal on regulator and set engine speed at output of 15 to 17 amperes. Remove ground and the charging rate may then be from two to seventeen am-

peres, depending on battery condition. Adjust tester resistance until charge rate is from six to ten amperes. This will show that regulator is operating but further check must be made to determine regulator operating voltage.

If the battery is in low charge condition, tester resistance must be increased. If the battery is fully charged, tester resistance must be decreased to zero; it may even be necessary to turn on the lights and run the starter for several revolutions to raise the generator output to this figure. With the generator at above output, the voltage should be as specified in accordance with condition of regulator—hot or at room temperature. If the regulator is set for higher than specified values, generator will constantly charge too high, and tend to burn out lamp bulbs. If the regulator is set lower than specified values, generator may charge less than the amount necessary to keep battery in fully charged condition.

It is necessary to know that the base of the regulator is properly grounded and the unit should be cycled before each reading is taken. With the vibrating type voltage control, ground the regulator field terminal while engine is run at a speed equivalent to 25 miles per hour. If the generator now charges, the trouble is in the voltage regulator. If the generator does not charge, ground *F* terminal on generator. If the generator now charges the trouble is due to an open circuit between the *F* terminal on generator and *F* terminal on regulator. If generator does not charge with either *F* terminal grounded, remove the generator lead and strike against a grounded part such as the engine block. If a spark occurs, the trouble is in the voltage regulator. If no spark occurs, the trouble is in the generator.



1927
TO
1953

WIRING HARNESSES

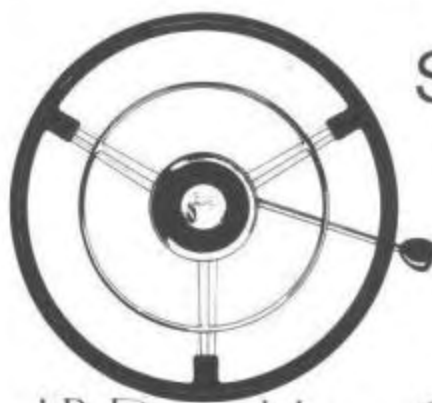
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Complete Hampton Coach upholstery kit in Bedford Gray for a '37 sport coupe, model 46-S, also fits Century model 66-S. ALAN MATTEI (#700). Willow Acres, Canastota, NY 13032. Call after 6 PM EST 315/697-2814.

1937-38 60-80-90 series transmission counter shaft, NORS, \$95 pr, includes S&H. JACK CORLISS (#279). 5942 Hersholt Ave., Lakewood, CA 90712. 310/925-3294.

Enclosed is a list of parts that I have for sale. I would appreciate you running the list in The Torque Tube. Please have people respond by self-addressed stamped letter indicating their needs.

- 1 - 1937 Front Floor mat \$25.
- 1 - 1937 Fuel pump N.O.S. \$60.
- 1 - 1937 Heat riser manifold \$20.
- 8 - 1937 Bumper guards (used, needs chrome) \$10. each
- 1 - 1938 Bumper guard \$15.
- 1 - 1937 Pair windshield wiper arm assembly 80 & 90 series \$20. each
- 1 - 1937 Truck hinge left (no pits) 80 series \$30.
- 1 - 1938 Radio (no knobs) \$90.
- 1 - 1938 Rear seat lighter knob \$15.
- 2 - 1937 Headlight switch & knob with stem \$15. each
- 1 - 1938 Radiator for Century (used) \$100.
- 2 - 1937 Glove box lock with plastic assembly \$15. each
- 1 - 1937 Brake lining set N.O.S. \$25.
- 1 - 1936 Pair of parking lights with lenses \$75.
- 1 - 1937 Pair of parking lights with lenses \$75.
- 1 - 1938 Pair of parking light with lenses (1 chrome broken) \$60.
- 1 - 1939 Pair of grills (used, not broken) \$100.
- 1 - 1939 Master cylinder N.O.S. \$50.
- 1 - 1937-38 Rear seat heater (G.M.) N.O.S \$300.
- 1 - 1936 Radio model #980525; 6 tube dash speaker complete with face plate, speaker, box and head with knobs \$250.
- 4 - Miscellaneous years carburetor (used) \$20. each
- 1 - 1937 starter no solenoid \$25.
- 1 - 1939 Radio \$90.
- 3 - 1939 Cigarette lighter (cream) \$10. each
- 1 - 1939 Cigarette lighter (black) \$10.
- 1 - 1937 Master cylinder N.O.S. \$50.
- 1 - 1937-38 Pair of tie rod ends 40 & 60 series N.O.S. \$35.
- 1 - 1937-38 Pair of trunk hinges 40 & 60 series (no pits) \$60.

- 3 - 1937 Intake valves N.O.S. \$10. each
- 3 - 1937 Exhaust valves N.O.S. \$10. each
- 1 - 1937 Rear stop light lens (center) N.O.S. \$20.
- 1 - 1937 Chrome horn ring (used) \$15.
- 1 - 1937 Clock with complete front (used) \$25.
- 1 - 1937-38 Front wheel bearing 40 & 60 series N.O.S. \$10.
- 1 - 1937-38 Water pump (used) \$20.
- 1 - 1937 Fuel pump rebuild kit (large series) \$15.
- 1 - 1937-38 oil breather pipe (used) \$5.
- 1 - 1937-38 Transmission (large series) \$100.
- 1 - 1937-38 Water pump 60 - 90 series N.O.S. \$75.
- 1 - 1937-38 Upper/lower pins 40 & 60 series \$40.
- 1 - 1937-38 King pin set bushing & bearings 80 & 90 series \$75.
- 1 - 1937-38 King Pin set 80 & 90 series \$40.
- 1 - 1937-38 Right front shock 40 & 60 series N.O.S. \$80.
- 1 - 1937 Marvel carburetor rebuilt (large series) \$200.
- 1 - 1937 Windshield wiper pump 40 & 60 series (used) \$20.
- 1 - 1937 Windshield wiper pump 80 & 90 series (used) \$35.
- 1 - 1937 Left front shock 80 & 90 series (used) \$60.
- 1 - 1937 Pair of sun visor (used) \$15.
- 1 - 1937 Pair of hand straps (used) \$10.
- 1 - 1937-38 License plate holder (front) \$20.
- 1 - 1937-38 Rearview mirror \$10.
- 1 - 1937 Coupe taillight (no top lens, no license holder) \$25.
- 1 - Taillight (no lens) \$15.
- 1 - 1937 Sun visor (left) \$7.
- 1 - 1937-38 Rearview mirror \$10.
- 1 - 1937 Dashboard chrome radio grill with screen \$10.
- 1 - 1937 Front ashtray with knob \$15.
- 1 - 1937 Front lighter with knob \$20.
- 1 - 1937 Master cylinder rebuild kit \$15.
- 1 - 1937 Wheel cylinder rebuild kit \$10.
- 1 - 1937 Rotor N.O.S. \$10.
- 1 - 1937 Points N.O.S. \$10.
- 2 - 1937 Condenser N.O.S. \$10. each
- 1 - 1937 Distributor cap N.O.S. \$20.
- 1 - 1937 Instrument dash with all gauges (glass broken) \$30.
- 1 - 1937 Voltage regulator (generic) N.O.S. \$30.
- 1 - 1937 Interior light switch \$5.
- 1 - 1937 Pair of brake & clutch pads N.O.S. \$20.
- 14 - 1937 Push rods (large series) \$2. each
- 1 - 1937 Windshield wiper arm assembly (left) \$15.
- 4 - 1937 Windshield wiper arm assembly (right) \$15. each
- 1 - 1937 Coil (generic) N.O.S. \$30.
- 1 - Coil (used) \$10.
- 1 - 1937 Radio hole filler plates \$20.
- 6 - 1948-56 Oil filter \$5. each
- 1 - 1937 Pair of parking lights complete (used) \$75.

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3.9 ring & pinion set, must be in good order or NOS. GEOFF HILLIARD (#698). 177 Pitt St., Eltham, Victoria 3095 AUSTRALIA.

'38 radio knobs & escutcheon; will buy complete radio if available with above. ALEX WISLOW (#844). 200 S. Prospect, Park Ridge, IL 60068. Days-708/825-8000; Eve-708/698-3168.

Good torque ball assembly or just the driven ball cap for '38 large series (5.000" diameter drive ball). Would take a good transmission and torque ball assembly if it doesn't need to be shipped too far. JOHN MULLENIX (#436). 1212 S. Michigan Ave., Hastings, MI 49058. 616/945-5807.

'37 useable steering wheel-no horn button; '37 40-series front & rear bumper brackets-straight. DAN TURCO (#902). 201/387-8281.

Left rear fender for '38 40 or 60 series. Have 60-series front fenders to trade or sell. Never any rust is a must! Mine have never had any rust. BOB COTANT (#564). 7203 Whispering Pines Dr. Shreveport, LA 71129. 318/688-1250.

Deck lid supports for early '37 business coupe, pre-body no. 4400, part nos. 4074727, 4074728. Trunk lid support assy.. for '38 or '39 80 or 90 series sedan, part no. 4082900. JIM FLACK (#499). 13070 Alta Lane South, Los Altos Hills, CA 94022. 408/434-3737; 415/941-0603.

Rear quarter body side molding (has pointed end) for '38 coupe; information on what rear end I could put in a '38 Limited to slow down the engine at highway speed. Call or write DAVID BYLSMA (#117). 7802 Chevalier Ct., Severn, MD 21144. 410/551-7236.

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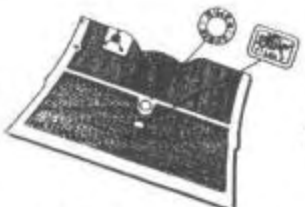
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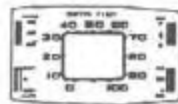
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Winder RINGS. HE-37(38).....\$ 4.



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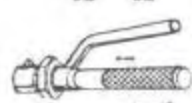
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Sept. 1991 - July, 1992

By John Breen (#533)

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